

'ROUNABOUT CAUSES PROBLEMS IN BARRACK ROAD'

C.T. October 8, 1971

AT last Tuesday's council meeting the highways and works committee's recommendation for the parking ban in Barrack Road was moved by the committee's vice-chairman, Coun. W. F. S. Freestone.

In coming to its decision the committee had borne in mind the helpful suggestions put forward by local organisations — particularly by the Chamber of Trade. However, it was considered that the chamber's suggestions were long term and would have no bearing on relieving Barrack Road of the increasing congestion in peak periods at the present time.

The interests of local traders have been kept very much in mind but clearly unless something is done quickly conditions in Barrack Road will become chaotic in the extreme.

"I am in favour of such organisations and associations as the Chamber of Trade and the Citizens' associations letting the council know their views on traffic orders etc., it is time, I feel, that where the circumstances permit, the conduct of the affairs of the borough should be brought closer to the man in the street.

"But for our immediate consideration it should be kept in mind that the recommendation before us stems from suggestions put up by a working party expert in dealing with problems of this kind."

Referring to the Chamber of Trade's suggestion for the new road across the River Stour to Castle Lane, he said that such an idea would require time and money and might prove to be something of a white elephant if and when Route Ten was brought into operation;

Some organisations had suggested that laybys should be constructed along the commercial parts of the road, but the council had been told that the grants would only be available for bus laybys carrying double yellow lines — this could lead to a restriction or reduction of facilities that motorists at present enjoyed.

Another suggestion was that Barrack Road should be widened. This was an idea which had been in the minds of members of the council for many years. He would merely ask: "How?" and "When?"

Ald. Maurice Lynk was against the recommendation because he didn't think it would have the desired effect — in fact he thought its implementation would make matters worse.

"The object of any traffic regulations in Barrack Road is to try and keep traffic moving more easily. I have never believed that parking in Barrack Road was the cause of the hold-ups anyway.

'DISORDER'

"I am of the opinion that the greatest hold-up in Barrack Road is caused by the Iford Roundabout and at this end by the traffic lights; and I cannot see anything but disorder in a proposal which will require motorists to cross very frequently the path of oncoming traffic which this recommendation will necessitate.

"The shops in Barrack Road I would say are particularly frequented by people stopping in cars and this will continue. But every time anyone going towards Bournemouth does this they will have to hold up the traffic to get across the road.

"The vice-chairman has said that the interests of all the local traders have always been kept fully in mind. I can't see that the interests of local traders are really considered here at all.

"I go along very much with the proposals put forward by the Chamber of Trade because I have been using this same argument for years.

'MAJOR TASK'

"The widening of Barrack Road is obviously a major task but it is not so large as the proposal for Route Ten which we have been talking about so long."

If it was possible for alterations to be made at Iford Roundabout and for Barrack Road to be widened then in this way he thought the council would be, to a certain extent, providing its own Route Ten and would go a long way towards solving the problem of Barrack Road.

Against the recommendation too was Coun. Tom Staniforth. Christchurch Council must surely hold the record for having more miles on which to paint yellow lines than most towns of a like kind in the south of England.

"I believe that if we were to abolish the right of motorists to park here it would lead to a speeding up of traffic in Barrack Road. I don't want this because it would lead to accidents and general danger to the public. We have already had so many fatalities in Barrack Road that I don't want any more.

FAST

Successive chief inspectors of police at Christchurch had always done their best to keep the traffic moving through Barrack Road as fast as possible without it having any opportunity of stopping, said Coun. John Morgan, adding: "It seems they want to get rid of the traffic from the borough — I can't see why they want to do this."

"I have to hear of anyone who has had any difficulty with holdups in Barrack Road. The hold-ups such as they are, only last for a few seconds or a minute." There were no hold-ups in Barrack Road such as there were in Bournemouth, he claimed.

"Therefore, this scheme of the police, which they seem so intent on seeing through, is the thin end of the wedge. It is, I think, a dead loss — a non-starter.

'ALTERNATIVE'

"You can't take parking spaces away unless you provide some alternative. Is MVEE willing to give up some of its land for car parking — has this been investigated? I can't see how we can restrict car parking spaces in Barrack Road without providing some alternative spaces.

None of the people on the working party had an intimate long experience of the Barrack Road traffic going back over ten years and therefore; he felt that their findings were not really as conclusive as they might have been.

Coun. J. B. Bolt said that the hazard that could be caused by motorists crossing oncoming traffic to park would be far greater than the hazard existing in Barrack Road at the present time.

He travelled along Barrack Road frequently and didn't think that a parking ban would improve the situation in Barrack Road at all.

Ald. Eric Spreadbury said that he didn't think that the traders would be hurt in any way by such a ban if the council was thinking of banning waiting on the other side of Barrack Road then the traders would be right to complain.

The recommendation was rejected on the casting vote of the Mayor, Coun. William Bentley.

Decision delights traders

BARRACK Road traders are "delighted" with the council's decision to drop its scheme for a half-mile parking ban on one side of the road.

The council last week rejected a highways and works committee recommendation to ban parking on the south (MVEE) side from Portfield Road almost to Jumpers Corner.

Said Christchurch Chamber of Trade traffic sub-committee chairman, Mr. John Kermode "We are delighted with the council's decision."

"It seems it has virtually accepted our view that the problems of traffic in Barrack Road are not caused by parking in it, but by the bottleneck, outside — Iford Roundabout."

RESISTED

Previous attempts by the council to put parking bans along Barrack Road have been resisted by the chamber of trade — successfully, except for small areas of "no waiting" near junctions with side roads.

The chamber wants Barrack Road to be widened to four lanes throughout its length, with parking lay-bys in addition to this along the commercial stretches. It also wants a new road to be built across the River Stour, so that Barrack Road will run into Castle Lane directly, missing out the Iford Roundabout bottleneck.

"We still want to meet the council's highways and works committee to discuss this idea," said Mr. Kermode. The chamber also hoped to meet Mr. Michael Heseltine, Under Secretary of State, Department of the Environment, in Bournemouth yesterday (Thursday). The meeting was being arranged by Mr. John Cordle, MP for Bournemouth East and Christchurch, for members of Christchurch Citizens' Association to discuss Route 10 with the minister.

The chamber of trade's scheme for Route 10 is, like that of other local organisations, to build it from Stony Lane to the Matchams Spur Road east of St. Catherine's Hill. In addition, the chamber wants Barrack Road to be widened to cater for local traffic.